

**The May 2002 Law Enforcement Needs Survey Analysis**  
**Department of Criminal Justice Services**  
**Law Enforcement and Crime Prevention Services Section**

**BACKGROUND**

On May 9, 2002, the Department of Criminal Justice mailed a needs assessment survey to approximately 305 law enforcement agencies in Virginia. This survey was designed to identify the needs of law enforcement agencies in Virginia over the next three to five years. The survey specifically asked agencies to identify their greatest needs and also list the types of services that would be beneficial for them. Forty-four percent of the agencies responded to the survey.

**ANALYSIS**

The first section of this document ranks the highest priority items listed by all localities responding to the survey. Items were counted and placed in a category title that best described the item. For instance, some agencies stated that personnel was their greatest need. Other agencies indicated that recruiting or retention was their greatest need over the next three years. To compile the data in a useful format, the personnel category includes all types of personnel requirements including sworn and non-sworn positions, the need to obtain funding for overtime, the need to retain present personnel or the need to recruit additional personnel. Items not listed on more than 1% of the surveys were not considered significant enough to include in the reported results. Only the items listed as each agency's number one need were compiled and analyzed in this section.

**HIGHEST PRIORITY NEEDS**

The following is a list of Virginia law enforcement agencies' highest priorities over the next three to five years.

Personnel 21 %	Twenty-one percent of the law enforcement agencies, responding to this survey, consider personnel their greatest need. Included in the personnel category is sworn and non-sworn positions, support staff, technical staff, and assistance with recruitment. Several surveys revealed that increased salary, retention, and maintaining current staff was their major concern, and those items were also compiled into the personnel category.
Facilities 16%	Sixteen percent of the agencies participating in the survey indicated their highest priority was a new building. This category also includes the need for expanded office space, any off site facility, jail or training facility listed as a first priority.
Communications 14%	Communications is the highest need for fourteen percent of law enforcement agencies. The communication category includes a wide range of equipment such as mobile radios, radio systems, base stations, towers, repeaters, and systems with interoperability with surrounding jurisdictions. (See also Computers, below.)
Vehicles 13%	Automobiles or other vehicles were the number one priority for thirteen percent of law enforcement agencies.
Computers 11%	Eleven percent of agencies listed purchasing or upgrading computers as a focus over the next three to five years. Agencies indicated that the

computers would be used in a variety of settings. Office computers, in-car computers, computers for dispatch, as well as mobile data terminals and lap top computers for use in automobiles are included in this category. Clearly this category should be looked at along with the Communications category above.

Video Cameras 4%	Four percent of law enforcement agencies listed acquiring video camera equipment as their greatest need over the next three to five years. The surveys often indicated that the video equipment would be used in automobiles. It is unknown if agencies included cameras for building security when they indicated a need for video cameras.
Software 3%	Three percent of the agencies listed software as their highest need. Surveys indicated a wide range of software needs, however, the most common were IBR, crime analysis and records management.
Drug enforcement 3%	This category includes any responses listing surveillance equipment or drug investigations as the highest priority.
State Accreditation 2%	Agencies did not indicate whether funding, technical assistance or additional personnel was driving this need.
Weapons 2%	The category of weapons includes purchasing shotguns for cars, as well as buying new or upgraded models of firearms.
Building security 2%	These buildings include law enforcement agencies and courts security.
Training 2%	The most frequent training listed was related to preparation for terrorist attacks. Also listed in the training category were responses indicating a need for training money, closer training (proximity) or equipment.
Protective wear & equipment 2%	While some agencies associated this need with domestic preparedness and acts of terrorism, other agencies indicated the need for protection when responding to bio-chemical hazards, etc. Also included in this category are items such as bulletproof vests, shields, and body armor.
Other 5%	The remaining 5 % of the responses were a mix of items that were less than one percent by category. Those items include live scan and polygraph equipment, canines, equipment for crime scene investigations, assistance crime prevention programs and materials.

The table listed below contains two categories of data. The first column represents agencies greatest needs over the next three to five years. This column is simply the data from the previous section compiled into a table format. The second column of data compiles the top three needs for all agencies in rank order. In addition to analyzing agencies *three* greatest needs, the major difference in this section is that items were counted by frequency and compiled into a single category. Frequency is the number of *times* a particular item was mentioned. For instance the top three needs listed by one agency may have been the need to increase the number of patrol officers, the need to increase support staff and the need to increase salary of patrol officers. Those needs – all categorized under Personnel - were counted three times even though that item might have been listed by only one locality. The listing of three greatest needs includes many localities listing a need once, and some localities listing one or more needs multiple times.

ITEM	Top Priority		ITEM	Three Greatest Needs
1. Personnel	20.7%		1. Personnel	13.5%.
2. Facilities	15.6%		2. Computers	13.2%
3. Communications	14%		3. Automobiles	12.5%
4. Automobiles	13.3%		4. Facilities	10.9 %
5. Computers	11.1%		5. Video Camera	9.7%
6. Video cameras	4%		6. Communications	7.9%
7. Software	3%		7. Surveillance/Drug Enforcement	4.6%
8. Surveillance Drug Enforcement Equipment	3%		8. Basic and Special Equipment	4.6%
9. State Accreditation	2.2%		9. Training	3.3%
10. Weapons	2.2%		10. Software	3.3%
11. Building Security	2.2%		11. Traffic Enforcement	2.5%
12. Training	2.2%		12. Live Scan	1.5%
13. Protective wear	2.2%		13. Weapons	1.3%
			14. Building Security	1.3%.
			15. Canine (and training)	1.3%
			16. Crime Lab Equipment	1.2%

Following Personnel, which ranks number one in both columns there is a difference in the ranking of items. However, the similarities in ranking order of the first six categories in both columns seems to indicate general agreement on the importance of all items in these first six categories. According to this survey, then, law enforcement's top six needs are personnel, new or expanded facilities, communications equipment, automobiles, computers and video equipment

## SERVICES NEEDED

The next section of the survey, asked agencies to list the types of services that would benefit their agency over the next two to three years. Those services are listed below in priority order.

### *Training: 37%*

Law enforcement agencies listed training needs that include a wide range of classes along with a need for closer, and on site DCJS certified training. The most frequently listed training relates to homeland security training, hazardous materials and biological response training. Other types of classes listed includes

- community policing training,
- leadership training,
- drug task force training,
- train the trainer instruction,
- instructions operating computers,
- courtroom security training and
- training for dispatchers

### *Assistance with crime prevention programs and services: 17%*

Crime prevention programs and services category also includes a need to obtain assistance developing neighborhood watch programs.

### *Assistance with recruiting 10%*

The recruiting category also includes assistance for expanding recruitment efforts that focus on recruiting minorities.

### *Assistance with Accreditation: 10%*

Responses did not indicate if the assistance needed was technical assistance, funding, or additional personnel.

### *Assistance with community policing programs: 8%*

Agencies did not provide any additional information regarding the type of assistance needed for the community policing programs however it is worthwhile to note that community policing training was also frequently listed as a training need.

### *Assistance with developing specific programs: 4%*

Although many agencies simply indicated they needed assistance setting up specific programs without listing the type of program, this category also includes identified programs such as domestic violence, drug enforcement programs, and setting up a youth buddy program.

### *Planning assistance: 4%*

Many law enforcement agencies simply listed a need for planning assistance; others indicated a need for facility space planning, assistance with developing a technology plan and critical incident planning.

### *Assistance with grants: 3%*

Grant assistance includes grant seeking, grant writing and monitoring.

*Updating policy and procedures, and assistance with studies: 3%*

Studies listed in this category include technical assistance with staffing and deployment, as well as technical services and services assessment.

*Assistance with computers and technology: 2%*

Agencies listed the need for technical assistance with Incident Based Reporting software, technical assistance with software programs as well as assistance with computer services.

*Crime analysis and training: 2%*